



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

BOBBY L. RUSH
FIRST DISTRICT, ILLINOIS



January 8, 2013

Dear Friend:

Senator Mark Kirk, a fellow Illinoisan and public servant, returned for the 113th Congress last week after an emotional climb to the top of the Senate steps. As I stood in awe watching the Senator take each step it reminded me that political partisanship has little value when welcoming back a survivor. Senator Kirk was not a Republican, but a fellow survivor.

Months prior Senator Kirk stated that he hoped “to climb the 45 steps that my staff counted from the parking lot to the Senate front door to fight for the people of Illinois.” Every step the Senator took was a step of determination and a commitment to a cause greater than him, to serve the people of Illinois. Kirk is Illinois’ highest-ranking Republican officeholder and suffered a major stroke in January 2012. Even in recovery, the Senator stated that he couldn’t “wait to go back to work to vote to tax less, borrow less, and spend less to fix our economy.”

When I embraced Senator Kirk, I immediately reflected upon Saturday, March 1, 2008, when I underwent successful surgery to remove a cancerous tumor from my salivary gland. The surgery was performed at the University of Chicago Medical Center and the surgical team was led by Dr. Elizabeth A. Blair. My recuperation period lasted for nearly five weeks. Then I underwent three months of chemo and radiation therapy. What kept me motivated was getting back to the House to continue my fight for the people of Illinois

I was very blessed because although rare, that cancer was determined to be localized. During that time, my very capable personal staff, as well as my subcommittee staff, actively managed, under my direction, all legislative and constituent services priorities. Then Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and other House leaders were well aware of my status and were very supportive.

I know what it means to come back from a devastating medical blow, but I also know what it means to recover and continue to fight for the people of Illinois. While I welcome Senator Kirk back to Congress, I also pray for his continued progress, swift and complete recovery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bobby L. Rush". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bobby" being the most prominent part.

Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress